

## Outside the Frame

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## Outside the Frame

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The sun set, casting a warm violet light across the sky. The seas were calm, the water rushing gently onto the beach. A salty smell hung in the air, thick but not unpleasant. On the shore, a small boy sat on a massive piece of driftwood with his head in his hands, looking up at a towering cliff with tears in his obsidian eyes.

> "Why did he have to do it?" he whispered to himself, a tear sliding down his cheek. "Why?" <br> "I dunno, Izzy." came a small voice from behind him.

> Izzy jumped in surprise, shooting a glance over his shoulder. "Don't scare me like that." he said, relieved to see that it was only TK, the youngest digi-destined. <br> "Sorry." replied the child, sitting down next to his friend, his feet dangling high above the ground. "What'cha thinkin' about?"

> Izzy returned his gaze to the cliff, pausing to wipe away his constant tears with the cuff of his sleeve. "Just remembering what happened last night. How Joe jumped from there..." he closed his eyes, unable to hold back the sadness in his voice. <br> TK looked at him, innocent blue eyes glassy with sadness. "You guys were good friends, huh." He quickly looked down at his sneakers, slightly regretting what he had said.

> "Yeah." Izzy replied softly, his voice barely a whisper. "We were." A tear spilled from the corner of his eye, landing in the loose sand at his feet. <br> Looking at the older boy, TK couldn't help but notice his friend's remorse. He needs to be alone, he thought. "Um... I think I better go now. Matt'll be looking for me." he said, sliding off the log. "I'll tell Tentomon and the others where you are, so nobody'll get worried or anythin'." TK looked to his friend, waiting for a response. He received only the slightest of nods. Slowly, he walked away, only pausing to cast a worried glance back at the mourning youth.

As Izzy stared up at the cliff, barely acknowledging the fact that TK had left, he could barely contain his sorrow. I cared about him so much, he thought, and now he's gone.

> "Oh, Joe.. why did you have to die?" he whispered, tears streaming down his cheeks and falling through his parted fingers. "If only you hadn't done that... you could have talked to me about what was bothering you.. I would have listened, for once. I really would have." <br> He thought again about the secret that he had been holding in his heart for so long. If only I had told while I had the chance, he thought. It wouldn't have mattered if he felt the same way or not, just as long as he knew that...

.....I love him.....

Izzy sobbed, no longer trying to hold back his tears. "WHY?!" he cried, looking to the sky as if he hoped that his friend could somehow hear him. "Why did you have to go?!" He lowered his head. "Why didn't I tell him when I had the chance."

> "Izzy!" called a familiar, yet slightly indistinguishable voice. <br> Izzy looked up. Where had it come from? He heard it again, coming from the direction of the ocean. I must be going crazy, he thought. The ocean has a voice now..

> A white head with a small orange mohawk poked itself out of the shallow blue water. "Hey, Izzy! Help me with this, will ya?" <br> "Gomamon?" Izzy asked, surprised. "What..?"

> "That's my name, don't wear it out, now GIVE ME A HAND, HERE! Geeze..." the digimon muttered as he began to pull something large ashore. It was drenched with sea water, and covered in weeds, but somehow, Izzy recognized it. <br> "Oh god.." Izzy gasped, running over to help Gomamon drag the body up onto the sand. "Is that..?"

> "Yeah." said Gomamon quietly. "It's him." <br> Izzy gazed down at the deathly pale face of his friend. "Thank you." he whispered to Gomamon, never taking his eyes off the corpse.

> Gomamon closed his eyes, sighing. "Don't think anything of it. I did it for myself... I just couldn't stand to leave him out there..." he turned and slowly walked back in the direction of camp. "I guess you'll want to bury him.... I'll be back later to help you out if you want, but.. I think I need to be alone for a while." <br> Izzy nodded. "Alright." he whispered, kneeling beside his friend's body.

> "Izzy?" Gomamon said, turning around. <br> "Yes?" Izzy asked, glancing at him.

> The digimon looked down at his flippers, eyes shining with tears. "He... he knew. About the way you feel, I mean. It's just... you always sleep next to him, and you mumble in your sleep... I bet you didn't know that. Well... he knew. I guess... in a way.. You told him about it yourself." <br> "Thanks for telling me." Izzy whispered, looking back down at the stiff figure that had once been his friend. "Thank you."

> Gomamon watched his friend, tears in his eyes. "He really cared about you, you know.. I'm the only one he told. Sort of. He'd watch you while you slept, and he'd say stuff to you, even though you couldn't hear it .. I don't really understand it, but he just seemed so calm when he was around you. He said he... he wished he could tell you how he felt to your face, but he was just too scared..." He turned, and started walking back towards camp. "I'm sorry.. that things didn't work out the way they should have." <p>

Izzy looked down at his friend's face. His eyes were closed lightly,

and it looked as if he had merely fallen asleep.

> "Oh, Joe." Izzy whispered as he reached out to gently caress his friend's pale face. "Why didn't you just tell me, if you knew I felt the same way? You'd still be alive, and.. we'd be together." Smiling sadly, he ran his fingers through Joe's blue hair. "I just can't believe you're gone. It's.. just... not logical." He sighed. "But I guess logic just doesn't have a place here.." <br> It seemed like forever before Gomamon returned. Head hung in sadness, the digimon dragged his flippers as he walked toward Izzy and.. what was left of his friend. The small bundle Gomamon held in his mouth seemed to have an unbearable weight, though it was probably only his imagination that made it seem like such a dark thing, though its contents were unquestionably precious. The sun had long ago set, and though the moon was full and bright overhead it seemed as though the world was shrouded in darkness.

> "I'm back." He said looking up at Izzy, voice muffled by the cloth in his mouth. <br> "Mm hmm..." acknowledged Izzy, not looking up.

> "I've... got something for you." Gomamon muttered, dropping the bundle. "I think.... no, I know... he would have wanted you to have this." <br> Carefully, Izzy picked up the bundle, ebony black eyes glistening. "What is it?" he whispered, fingers itching to untie it.

> "See for yourself." was Gomamon's only reply. <br> Slowly, fingers trembling, Izzy untied the cloth, revealing the treasure inside.

> The young boy was lost for words. In his hands lay what would have seemed like nothing to another, but was priceless to him: Joe's Digivice, as well as his tag and the crest of Reliability. And also, wrapped up carefully in a scrap of handkerchief, were his friend's glasses, and a small, framed picture of Joe and Izzy. <br> "He carried that picture around everywhere. I figured that he would have liked it if.. you had it now." said Gomamon, voice shaking.

> Izzy was silent, staring at the articles in his palm. The digimon's words hardly even reached his ears. "He's gone." he whispered. "Not just departed, but deceased. Forever." <br> Gomamon closed his eyes, trying not to let his emotions get in the way of the task at hand. "We should bury him." he murmured.

> "Yeah." replied Izzy, wiping his eyes as he carefully stowed Joe's possessions in his backpack. "We should." <p>

It was far into the night before they finished burying their friend. Gomamon had chosen an enclosed area, high above the tideline, where "He'd be able to rest without worrying, for once" the digimon had said, laughing sadly. Their task completed, Izzy and the digimon returned to camp. Their friends had gone to sleep quite a while ago, and the fire had already burned down to little more but brightly glowing coals.

> "So." Izzy said, sighing as he added more wood to the fire. "What're you going to do now?" he sat down next to Gomamon, who was staring into the flames. <br> "What do you mean?" asked the digimon, looking at his friend.

> The light reflected in Izzy's dark eyes, and he glanced down at the photograph that he held in his hands. "I mean.. now that he's gone.. what're you going to do? You don't have to continue fighting with us." <br> "Are you kidding?" Gomamon said, laughing. "I'm sticking with you. After all, I don't have noplacelse else to go, and besides, I've gotten attached to you guys."

> "Really?" Replied Izzy, looking at the digimon with a slightly mystified expression. "You mean that?" <br> Gomamon grinned, and placed his flipper ovetop Izzy's hand. "Yep! You're stuck with me.

Whether you like it or not, you have two digimon now." he smirked. "Hope Tentomon won't be jealous of a cute little guy such as myself, eh?"

> "Thanks." Izzy smiled, and hugged the digimon tightly. It would have crushed me if he said he was leaving, he thought. <br> "No problem, amigo," mumbled Gomamon, snuggling against Izzy's chest. "After all, I can't just leave you guys. I'm part of the team, and that ain't never gonna change."

> A small smile flickered across Izzy's lips. "Yeah." he murmured. Gazing into the fire, a thought came to him. "I wonder if you would be able to digivolve if I wore Joe's digivice and crest..." his voice trailed off, realizing what he had said. <br> Gomamon looked up at him, eyes shining with something that might have been sadness, or happiness, or both. "Look." he said, laughing slightly. "Don't feel so bad about him. He did what he wanted to do, and there wasn't anything we could have done to prevent it. And besides..." he smiled, tilting his head. "Joe wouldn't have wanted you to be sad about him leaving. 'specially if you were going to be sad forever. Don't worry about it, his memory won't ever fade. And I'm sure he'll never forget you, wherever he is now."

> Izzy looked down at the photograph he still held. "You're right," he said after a moment of thought. "I never thought of it that way..." <br> Gomamon gave no reply. Izzy glanced down, and smiled slightly at the sight of the sleeping digimon. "G'night, Gomamon." he murmured. Yawning, he realized that he, too, was exhausted. Finally, after only the slightest of resistance, he closed his eyes and surrendered himself to the warmth of sleep.

Author's notes: Yeah, I know, this one's odd. I have a tendency to write odd fics. Most of you know that.=) And if you couldn't tell, it's a sequel to "The Water Asked Me For A Kiss".

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file.